is only quintessence of argument—pointed and concise expression of condensed thought. There are not many minds that can well reach it to construct it, and there are not few that can never comprehend it to appreciate it; but it is often indeed that a very short aphorism will convey to a thinking mind more thought than the labour and research of a volume.

Mr. Donaldson has entitled his work "Architectural Maxims and Theorems, in elucidation of some of the principles of Design and Construction: and Lecture on the Education and Character of the Architect." The first part of the volume is a system of principles and precepts, in number one hundred and sixty, methodically arranged under the two general heads of "Fine Art" and "Construction." The second part is a lecture delivered at University College, as a valedictory to a class of architectural students, and has for its theme the right manner of education and study, and the character in practice, of the architect.

It is not my purpose to enter in detail into critical discussion of peculiarities in Mr. Donaldson's opinions; still less is it any aim of mine to try to ferret out and expose error or imperfection: the short time to which the present discourse must be limited may, I think, be best employed in simply and briefly laying hold of a few points the most profitable for your examination and inquiry, without pretending to thorough criticism, or even to complete discussion. For the "Maxims" are not lacking in most valuable springs of thought: there are single small sentences by the score, on which might be readily built as many times long and profitable discourses: we are circumscribed, not by our subject, but by our time.

First, then, let us turn to the preface of the volume—one of its concluding sentences,—"We ought no longer to have to wander in uncertainty as to the laws of our art after the experience and lessons to be derived from the monuments erected during 4,000 years." To such a sentiment common sense would probably reply thoughtlessly in a sort of affirmative. Certainly, it says, one might think so; after four thousand years of endeavour, the world ought surely by this time to have attained some success—some knowledge of the system of the work—principles for precept-regulation—facts and truths for standard criticism. I wish it were so. We ought not to wander in uncertainty;—beware of specious fallacy;—*do* we wander in uncertainty? Undeniably we do. Granted that we ought not to wander in uncertainty, that the world by this old time of day ought surely to have learned in some sort the system of the work. Where is our certainty then,—where our system? Principles, we have said, for precept-regulation;—yes, Stuart and Revetts, Taylor and Cresys, Rickmans, Pugins, Paleys,—they are our high priests, and we are content to follow them; in them we have certainty to guide us. Facts and truths, we have said, for standard criticism; yes, mighty precedents in old parish churches, ruins and mutilated fragments; long since dead and buried stones,—they are our canons and our guiding stars, and we are content to do them homage; in them we have certainty to judge by: and he whose spade digs deepest has his seat highest in the senate of the critics. There are principles in nature and truth which regulate and govern—*must* regulate and govern of their own high right, whereby men's minds, tastes, judgments, think and conclude, fancy, approve, reject, like,—essences of beautiful, elements of true and right,—immutable principles for regulation, irrefragable facts for guidance,—their certainty the certainty of nature's very scheme and system: it is a sorry substitute for this surely, that we have remnants of monk-built churches long ago to build our churches by; mansions of old Italy and old England long ago to build our mansions, banks, clubs, railway houses by—even to their every door and window, and balcony, and chimney; barons' castles long ago to build our prisons, and fortresses, and towers, and lighthouses by; even old chairs and tables and old sculpture-work of the monks long ago, by which to have our chairs and tables and sculpture-work contortedly carved. There are fundamental truths and laws in the physics and metaphysics of nature, by which, if we but knew them, there is not a point, least or greatest, most particular or most universal, most simple and seemingly self-evident, or most complex and seemingly for ever hidden, but may be tested, explained, deduced, proved; it may be difficult to find them—undoubtedly it is difficult—but still, if so, let us not fall back upon mere grave-opening from the long since dead—mere digging for precedents from the past,—can *this* ever give us criticism?

We ought no longer to wander in uncertainty as to the laws of our art: one might think we ought not, but we do; and simply by reason of our reliance upon those very 4,000 years of monuments for guidance. If we knew less of these (in a certain sense) we should be all the better—all the wiser. Former ages knew nothing of the sort, and they were all the better—all the wiser, as it seems—for they compassed works whose imagination we wonder at. Their mind worked by simple strong unsophisticated nature; our mind works by learning a way—weakly, uncertainly, corruptedly. When archæology arose, art fell. Yet we need not, altogether, either deplore its rise and government, or seek to obtain liberty by rejection of all its learning; we may rather let it run its course, which will be good. The end is this; by study of this learning we come at last to find truths, principles, laws; and, albeit, that this end seems distant somehow and delayed, yet will it, at its own time, come triumphantly, and we shall be all the better then for that whereby we are at present, while we thus pass through it, often so very much the worse. The child-like uncertainty in which this age wanders, its strange submission and dependency upon the past, will, in due time, give place to the confidence of strength, the manliness of freedom. It is, perhaps, well, after all, that we should thus serve apprenticeship to the past, and architecture be the pupil of archæology.

Is not maxim 93, therefore, also in error? "To copy is the instinct of the mere animal faculty; to imitate is the property of reasoning intelligence. In fact, 'the proper use,' as Poynter suggests, 'to be made of the study of the ancients in their works of art is not to copy, but to think like them'." Truly, it seems to me, there can be but small difference between this copying and this imitation; if the one is servility, the other is surely not independence: the difference is but a degree, six of the one and six-and-a-half of the other. I would neither copy the ancients, nor endeavour to think like them,—but examine their thinkings; when I did so, simply, except for suggestion, from the improvement to be derived from the deduction of their good principles; to endeavour to think like them, certainly, if you mean that I shall think freely for myself and my circumstances, as they admirably thought freely for themselves and theirs,—but never to think like them, if you mean merely that I shall think in their manner of thought—learn their system in their school.

"The ancients themselves," says maxim 16, "were in nothing bound by mere precedent. No two monuments of the Egyptian, Greek, or Roman artists were precisely alike; yet each was imbued with the leading feature of its style or period; and this feeling was progressive, not retrograde." A sentiment both well expressed and truly argued. Perhaps, too, we may one day attain to a leading feature for our period; and it will be an exquisite step when we thus come to think like them. The feeling was progressive; our progression now, while we are improving in the spirit of the styles, as unquestionably we are, is only child's play and school lessons,—the progression of a manly mind is advancement in free thought.

It would scarcely be impartial criticism if I were to neglect to note, all this while, that, although I rejoice to find the eminent author of the "Maxims and Theorems" declaring himself so far in advance of what I have supposed the age to be, and even still cherish a shrewd opinion that it is, yet he seems very anxious to speak a word for the old school, that it may not be considered as overthrown—that the ancients, whom he has worshipped, may not be utterly denied the homage they were wont to claim. These are days of revolutions of crazy empires, spontaneous combustion of old thrones, vehemently forcible contempt of ungenerous dignities; and Mr. Donaldson concedes to popular clamour popular rights; but he still remembers with honour the glories of the old *régime*, and is constrained to lift up his voice for the divine right of us kings. When I allude to Mr. Donaldson's well known and, I presume, self-acknowledged prejudice for classic art, I do it with much honour to him compared with the worshippers of the dreary monks; but still I fancy him to be too much of the legitimist when I find him saying (Maxim 20) "He who talks of common sense as superseding all reference to the opinions of those who are gone before, had better cease to speak a cognate language, abandon every known art, and invent a new order, ere he rejects the experience of ages and the wisdom of thinking men of former times;" and again (Note, p. 78, Lecture) "Did they (the ancients) create these (works) at once from their own resources, or, as the phrase now is, from *common sense*, a term identical with presumptuous ignorance?" The ancients must soon give up the field if this be their last position. Misinterpretation of language, taking advantage of what is *said*, to the prejudice of what is *meant*, is a common critic's sin. I am not about to sin it for myself; but I must really charge our author with sinning it here. For where is the man who really argues what these passages really condemn? If one can be found who declares the results of the experience of ages—the wisdom gathered through 4,000 years of gathering—to be rejected—worthy of nothing but to be rejected—by his common sense, his common sense, I would say, must be of poor value, and his resources small for disproving a charge of presumptuous ignorance. But if the man can be found who holds, and teaches, and charges us with presumption because we will not allow that this world of ours, thus old and thus experienced by the increasing wisdom of increasing years, shall refuse itself independent thought and bow before an *authority* in *antiquity*, such a man is at least as far from the line of reasonable truth.

"The works of the ancients were founded upon the finest perception of fitness" (Maxim 17) is the expression in few words of a most comprehensive principle. Fitness, appropriateness, simple, unsophisticated, unblushing ingenuousness, and truth,—here lies indeed the grand prime secret of ancient eminence, modern debasement. "Construction should be the origin of decoration and ornament" (Maxim 52);—"True beauty cannot be apart from convenience" (53);—"There is no part of a building (63) which has not the power of adding considerably by appropriate treatment to the effect of the edifice;"—in all these there lies most valuable and in our day most needful truth. What a *gratuitous* offence all our sham and make-believe is when you think of it! It cannot be too broadly stated, contradiction or exception for ever fearlessly challenged,—*conceal, disguise, refuse nothing*. In the words of Maxim 84, "all become gold in the hands of a skilful architect, but in the hands of some of our practitioners, no matter what it is, we know not what it may become. The days are not now when human sight can tell by the face of a thing what it is,—we must peer narrowly and argue many chances, for there is much craft and cunning scheming to see through. Doors are not doors, but something else; windows are not windows; chimneys are not chimneys: a strong arch of masonry is a suspended thing of lath and plaster; a marble column is a smoke flue,—and perchance the stove-pipe passes boldly into the side of it; mighty old buttresses of support and counter-thrust are hollow encumbrances—decorations of the last year—and already pulling heavily towards ruin; pinnacles are chimney-pots, with the smoke creeping stealthily out behind, as if you could not see it; carved entablatures of stone are sly arches, of paltry brick, with plaster casts stuck on—or paper; these are days of sagacity and huge contrivance in this way. Frequently in a single building an industrious schemer will waste ingenuity enough to convert a Brahmin or weigh the moon.

One maxim which particularly attracted my attention is No. 21—"Can it be supposed by any who have thought on the subject that beauty of form or gracefulness of proportion, even in a moulding, depends upon chance"

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